THE AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICYMAKING PROCESS
Monday 1:30-4:00 pm
Fall 2015

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Office Hours (most weeks): Mon 4-5; Thurs 11:00-noon

OBJECTIVES

This course explores the theory and practice of U.S. foreign policymaking, focusing on the actual processes by which international economic and security decisions are made. The Obama administration moves toward its conclusion deeply engaged on both fronts. It recently won a noisy struggle for new “trade promotion authority,” essential to completion of a landmark Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. As this is written, it is fighting to avoid Congressional override of the path-breaking Joint Comprehensive Plan of [Nuclear] Action signed by Iran and six leading world powers. These domestic struggles underscore how, on security and economic matters alike, officials and institutions in the Obama administration and Congress are being driven, like their predecessors, to compete for influence at home even as they seek it abroad, and their decision making processes are being shaped at least as much by personalities and political/societal trends as by institutional and constitutional prerogatives.

To encourage specific understanding about the practice of US foreign policymaking, the course presents a mix of historical cases and analyses of the policy process in general (models, the executive branch, Congress). After introductory weeks centered mainly on general models and institutions, we will move to examination of economic and national security policymaking in particular administrations, beginning with those of John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Students will examine the roles and inter-relationships of key officials, and how they addressed major international security and economic issues. In so doing, we will explore repeatedly the relevance of theory to understanding of what actually happens. Readings will include contemporary documents, retrospective accounts by participants, and academic analyses.

To encourage focus on the people and processes involved, students will assume the vantage points of particular officials (e.g. President’s national security adviser, secretary of the treasury) and be prepared to discuss successive issues and administrations from their perspectives.

Readings, revisions and additions to this syllabus, course notices, and other relevant materials will be posted on Canvas (elms.umd.edu), a web interface open to all students taking the course. For communications the instructor will use coursemail, a more flexible mode of communication. (puaf780-0101-fall15@coursemail.umd.edu).
REQUIREMENTS

(1) **Writing Assignments:**

Students will write two memos and one short paper on a single policy episode of their choice. This must be an actual issue addressed by a post-1945 President and his senior advisors—it is recommended that it be one in an administration treated in the course. Pertinent examples include decisions to impose sanctions against Japan on automobile trade in 1995, abandon support of the dollar in 1971, intervene in Libya’s civil war in 2011, negotiate on nuclear weapons with North Korea in 1994 or 2005, begin or end the Gulf War in 1991, withdraw troops from Lebanon in 1984, drive down the dollar in 1985, go to war in Iraq in 2003, agree to permanent normal trade relations with China in 2000, etc.

** In writing the memos, a student should assume the role of a staff aide to a senior official (“your boss”), such as the secretary of state or defense. You should write as if working for that official at the time the issue was being considered. You should not, therefore, include information that was not available until after the decision was reached.

** Memo #1 (due October 2nd) is an information memo: it should provide the necessary background concerning the issue, including all the relevant factors needed to arrive at a decision. It may be addressed to your “boss” or to a decision group (e.g., National Security Council). It should not include recommendations, and should be sufficiently objective that it will be viewed as such by officials with differing points of view.

** Memo #2 (due November 6th) will be a briefing and advocacy memo, addressed to your boss, a Cabinet member or agency head. This should be written to prepare her/him for a meeting (whether historically real or assumed) at which the issue will be decided. This memo should take the information provided in the first memo as given and focus on preparing the agency head for the decision-making meeting by:

(a) describing the state of play on the issue within the Administration;
(b) suggesting the position the agency head should take;
(c) presenting a strategy to enhance the prospect that the issue will be decided as your memo recommends.

** Alternatively, this second memo can be written for someone outside the Executive Branch, e.g., a congressman concerned with the issue or the head of an NGO or private business with interests at stake. In that case, the memo should describe the state of play on the issue within the Administration and Congress, recommend a specific policy choice, and present a strategy for getting that choice adopted.

All memos should be no more than three pages in length (Courier 12 point, single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs), within 1" margins. The first memo is to be revised in response to feedback from the instructor and resubmitted as an attachment to the second memo.

There is no one right way to draft a memo, but a few words about style and format are appropriate. First and most important, the writing should be direct and terse (in contrast to the
discursive style of an essay). The central message should be conveyed at the outset, with details to follow. Both sentences and paragraphs should be short. Key points should be highlighted. Major sections should have headings. Pages should be numbered. Throughout, think of yourself as writing for a busy senior official—you must engage her interest, and keep it

** The third writing assignment (due December 5th) will a short analytic paper (about 5 pages, double-spaced, NTE 1700 words) that relates the chosen issue and the decision process thereon to at least one theoretical proposition drawn from course readings. Further instructions will be provided.

Students are welcome to discuss these and other matters during my office hours or at other times when my door is open—I post my schedule on that door.

(2) Roles and Policy Exercises. To enhance insight into the reality of policy making, students will take on roles of senior US officials and maintain them for several weeks: one role, beginning September 21st, for the national security section of the course, and a different role, beginning November 2nd, for the international economic section. Specific exercises built around these roles will be defined for specific classes—additional information on these exercises will be distributed by the second class, September 14th. Overall, students should do their reading with their specific roles in mind—e.g., what was the perspective of the JCS chairman, or the Under Secretary of the Treasury, during a particular administration and the issues important to it? Consistent, effective, informed participation in the exercises—and in the overall discussion—will be important to a student’s success in the course.

(3) Final Exam? Based on the overall quality of the discussions and exercises, the professor will decide—by early December—whether or not to give a final examination.

(4) Grading. If there is no final exam, the instructor will construct a base grade based on a weighted average for memos and papers submitted (assuming improvement, the second memo assignment will count double the weight of the first). This base grade will then be adjusted, upward or downward, based on a student’s seminar participation. If there is a final, its weight will be 25 percent of the final grade.

READINGS

The following two books are required reading for the course and should be purchased.

Ivo H. Daalder and I. M. Destler, In the Shadow of the Oval Office: Profiles of the National Security Advisers and the Presidents They Served (Simon and Schuster, 2009).

The bulk of the remaining readings will be available via Canvas. Those on electronic reserve are labeled Canvas CR. Those with links on the “Modules” page are marked, simply, “Canvas.” Two case studies (at guisd.org) must be ordered directly due to copyright restrictions.

**PART ONE: POLICY MAKING FOR NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES**

**August 31:** Iran: THE BIG Case in Executive-Congressional Relations  
**Reading:** “Documents Related to the ‘Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action’ signed by The Islamic Republic of Iran and the ‘P5 = 1’ Nations (China, France, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom, United States), July 14, 2015.”

[September 7: NO CLASS, Labor Day]

**September 14:** National Security: Models and Organization  

**September 21:** President, Congress, and Public  
**Readings:** Daalder and Destler, *In the Shadow of the Oval Office* (Simon and Schuster, 2009), chap. 1 (pp. 1-11). Book for purchase  
Public Law 93-148, November 7, 1973. Canvas CR or link

September 28: **Kennedy Administration**

**Readings:**
- Daalder and Destler, *In The Shadow of the Oval Office*, chap. 2.

Selected Kennedy Documents Canvas link
- Bundy to Kennedy, hand-written note, no date (probably May 1961)
- Bundy to Kennedy, June 22, 1961;
- Bundy to O'Donnell, January 5, 1962;
- Bundy to Kennedy re: “Chester Bowles’ speech,” September 17, 1962

October 5: **Nixon Administration**

**Readings:**
- Daalder and Destler, chap. 3.
- George and Stern, pp. 212-14.
- Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years*, Little, Brown, 1979, pp. 17-53. Canvas link. (Chapter 1, optional reading, is both amusing and illuminating.)

Selected Nixon Documents (Canvas link)
- Henry A. Kissinger, "Memorandum for the President-Elect," December 27, 1968, et. seq. [Read Documents 1, 7, and 8--skim those in between.]
- Tony Lake, “Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger” on “Relations with the State Department,” November 14, 1969, with attachments. [Document 86]

October 12: **Reagan Administration**

**Readings:**
- Daalder and Destler, chap. 5.
- Report of the President’s Special Review Board (The Tower Commission), February 26, 1987, Parts I through V. Canvas CR
- George and Stern, pp. 222-34.
- George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1993), pp. 863-78. Canvas CR
October 19:  Clinton Administration: National Security  
**Readings:**  
Daalder and Destler, chap. 7.  
PDD2: Organization of the National Security Council, January 20, 1993. [Canvas link](#)  
George and Stern, “Presidential Management Styles, pp. 241-61. [Canvas CR](#)  
James M. Goldgeier, “NATO Expansion,” in Wittkopf and McCormick, Domestic Sources. [Canvas CR](#)  

October 26:  Bush (41) and Bush (43) Administrations: National Security  
**Readings:**  
Daalder and Destler, chaps. 6 and 8  
Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice* (specific chapters to be assigned).  
NSD-1, “Organization of the National Security Council System,” January 30, 1989. [Canvas link](#)  
NSPD-1: “Organization of the National Security Council System,” February 13, 2001. [Canvas link](#)  
AND EITHER (to be negotiated with instructor):  
George and Stern, pp. 234-41 and [Canvas link](#)  
OR:  
Public Law 107-40, September 18, 2001. To Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the United States. [Canvas link](#)  
Public Law 107-243, October 16, 2002. To Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq. [Canvas link](#)  
PART TWO: POLICY MAKING FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

November 2:: Foreign Economic Policymaking


November 9: Nixon Economic
Joanne Gowa, "The Role of Structure and Process" (pp. 88-125), and "The Camp David Meeting" (pp. 147-70), in Closing the Gold Window: Domestic Politics and the End of Bretton Woods, (Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 88-125, 147-170. Canvas CR

November 16: Carter Economic
Volcker and Gyohten, Changing Fortunes, ("Experiments in Coordination" Volcker 136-51.pdf), and pp. 163-74 ("Taking On Inflation") Canvas CR

OPTIONAL: Daalder and Destler, In the Shadow of the Oval Office, chap. 4.

November 23: Reagan and Bush (41) Economic
Readings: Dryden, "A New Heaven and a New Earth" and "The Turning Point" (pp. 279-329) and "Superwoman Meets Her Match" (pp. 355-80), in Trade Warriors. Canvas Course Reserves

Volcker and Gyohten, "Taking On Inflation" (pp. 174-84) and "Bringing Down Superdollar" in Changing Fortunes. Canvas CR


November 30: Clinton Economic
Readings: Presidential Executive Order 12835 and PDD/NEC-2 Canvas Course Reserves


December 7: Obama and the Future [readings to be revised]
Readings: Daalder and Destler, chap. 9.

Ralph G. Carter and James M. Scott, “Hitting the Reset Button: Changing the
Canvas Course Reserves

I. M. Destler, “‘Donilon to the Rescue?’” Foreignaffairs.com, October 13, 2010


OR


One additional article of your choice.